



Belfast City Council

Report to	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Provisional Recommendations of the District Electoral Areas Commissioner
Date:	24th May, 2013
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (Ext 6314)
Contact Officer:	

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will recall that the Local Government (Boundaries) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012 gave effect to the establishment of the boundaries of the new 11 Councils with effect from 2015. It also established the boundaries of the wards within the new 11 Councils.
1.2	As Members will be aware, District Electoral Areas (DEAs) are the constituencies used for local government elections, and Mr Richard Mackenzie has been appointed to act as the District Electoral Areas Commissioner for the purpose of establishing the DEAs.
1.3	The Commissioner has now released his provisional recommendations for the 11 new Councils and in Belfast has recommended the establishment of 10 DEAs.

2	Key Issues
2.1	There will be an eight week consultation period on the recommendations ending on 27th June.
2.2	Depending upon the nature of any objections received during this consultation period, the Commissioner may arrange for public inquiries to be held before Assistant Commissioners and shall arrange for such an inquiry to be held if a District Council or 100 electors officially registered within that district calls for a public inquiry.

2.3	The Commissioner has explained that the request from a District Council must take the form of a resolution. In the past, the Council has decided to leave consideration of matters pertaining to the establishment of local government boundaries and DEAs to the various political parties on the Council. However, on this occasion it will be necessary for the Council to consider if it wishes to submit a corporate objection.
2.4	<p>The Commissioner's timetable for completing his work is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of provisional recommendations – April 2013 • 8 week consultation period – April – June 2013 • Public inquiries held – September – October 2013 • Final recommendations – December 2013

3	Resource Implications
3.1	None.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	There are no relevant equality and good relations considerations.

5	Recommendations
5.1	The Committee is requested to decide if it wishes to call for a local public inquiry to be held into the provisional recommendations of the District Electoral Areas Commissioner in so far as they affect the grouping of wards into District Electoral Areas in the new Belfast district.

6	Decision Tracking
<p>Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager</p> <p>June, 2013</p>	

7	Key to Abbreviations
DEA – District Electoral Area	